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PRESS RELEASE

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**9TH ANNUAL VIETNAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION
FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS CONFERENCE**

December 9, 2011 [Hanoi/Washington, D.C.]. The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) is pleased to announce the 9th Annual VEF Fellows and Scholars Conference, which will be hosted this year by Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Shreveport and Louisiana State University Shreveport from Tuesday, January 3, through Thursday, January 5, 2012. The theme of the Conference is ***Connecting the Dots: The International Journey to Cooperation and Collaboration***. Louisiana State University is one of the top public universities in the United States and is a member of the VEF Alliance of 109 U.S. top universities supporting the mission of VEF.

The purpose of VEF, an independent U.S. Federal Government agency (www.vef.gov), is to build the relationship between Vietnam and the United States through educational exchanges. VEF activities focus only on the sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), engineering, mathematics, medicine, and technology (including information technology). VEF educational exchange activities include three programs: (1) Fellowship Program, which sends Vietnamese nationals to the United States for graduate degree programs; (2) Visiting Scholar Program, which supports Vietnamese nationals, who already hold a doctorate, to further develop their professional skills via studies, research, and/or observational activities at leading U.S. academic institutions; and (3) U.S. Faculty Scholar Program, which supports U.S. professors to teach courses at Vietnamese institutions for one to two semesters by teaching on-site in Vietnam or by teaching via interactive, real-time videoconferencing from the United States.

Speakers at the Conference include the following Vietnamese dignitaries: H.E. Nguyen Quoc Cuong, Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States; Dr. Chu Ngoc Anh, Vice Minister, Vietnam Ministry of Science and Technology; and Dr. Nguyen Xuan Vang, Director General of Vietnam International Education Development (VIED), Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training. Notable speakers from LSU include the following: Dr. Robert Barish, Chancellor, LSU Health Sciences Center, and Dr. Vincent Marsala, Chancellor LSU Shreveport. In addition, Ambassador David Shear, Ambassador of the United States to Vietnam, will give remarks that are videotaped in advance as he is not able to attend in person. Furthermore, Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce Vietnam will speak at the conference. Finally, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of VEF, Mr. Chris Fussner, will provide opening remarks.

Dr. Lynne McNamara, Executive Director of VEF, commented: "VEF provides a significant link in creating professional and academic collaboration between Vietnam and the United States. Hosting the VEF Annual Conference at top U.S. universities, like Louisiana State University, gives our Fellows and Scholars a chance to get to know the excellence of different U.S. academic institutions."

During the 9th Annual Conference, VEF Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars will participate in a variety of sessions, discussions, and opportunities for networking, including the following:

- Career Development Workshops presented by both LSU Health and LSUS faculty/staff
- VEF Alumni Presentations: *Connecting the United States and Vietnam: Experiences of VEF Alumni*
- Scientific Sessions: Presentations and Poster Sessions by participating U.S. faculty, VEF Fellows (Vietnamese graduate students), and VEF Visiting Scholars (post-doctoral scholars)
- "All the Ways Home" Session: Preparing VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars to return to Vietnam

Over 150 VEF Fellows and Scholars from top level universities across the United States will be present at this Conference.

For further information on VEF and VEF Programs, please visit the VEF website at: www.vef.gov